

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. J. RES. 51

Proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 14, 2019

Mr. RATCLIFFE (for himself, Mr. BABIN, and Mr. WRIGHT) submitted the following joint resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

JOINT RESOLUTION

Proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

1 *Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives*
2 *of the United States of America in Congress assembled*
3 *(two-thirds of each House concurring therein), That the fol-*
4 *lowing article is proposed as an amendment to the Con-*
5 *stitution of the United States, which shall be valid to all*
6 *intents and purposes as part of the Constitution when*
7 *ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several*
8 *States within seven years after the date of its submission*
9 *for ratification:*

1 “ARTICLE —

2 “SECTION 1. Total outlays for any fiscal year shall
3 not exceed total receipts for that fiscal year, unless two-
4 thirds of the whole number of each House of Congress
5 shall provide by law for a specific excess of outlays over
6 receipts by a rollcall vote.

7 “SECTION 2. Total outlays for any fiscal year shall
8 not exceed 18 percent of economic output of the United
9 States, unless two-thirds of each House of Congress shall
10 provide for a specific increase of outlays above this
11 amount.

12 “SECTION 3. The limit on the debt of the United
13 States held by the public shall not be increased unless
14 three-fourths of the whole number of each House shall
15 provide by law for such an increase by a rollcall vote.

16 “SECTION 4. Prior to each fiscal year, by not later
17 than such date as Congress may by law require, the Presi-
18 dent shall transmit to Congress a proposed budget for the
19 United States Government for that fiscal year in which
20 total outlays do not exceed total receipts. If the President
21 fails to transmit to Congress a proposed budget which
22 meets the requirements of the previous sentence by the
23 date required by Congress, the President may not receive
24 any compensation for his services for any month which

1 follows that date until the President transmits to Congress
2 a proposed budget which meets such requirements.

3 “SECTION 5. For each fiscal year, by not later than
4 such date as Congress may by law require, Congress shall
5 consider and approve a budget for the United States Gov-
6 ernment which meets the requirements of section 4 of this
7 article. If Congress fails to approve a budget which meets
8 such requirements by the date required by Congress,
9 Members of Congress may not receive any compensation
10 for their services for any month which follows that date
11 until Congress approves a budget which meets such re-
12 quirements.

13 “SECTION 6. A bill to increase revenue shall not be-
14 come law unless two-thirds of the whole number of each
15 House shall provide by law for such an increase by a roll-
16 call vote.

17 “SECTION 7. The Congress may waive the provisions
18 of this article for any fiscal year in which a declaration
19 of war is in effect. The provisions of this article may be
20 waived for any fiscal year in which the United States is
21 engaged in military conflict which causes an imminent and
22 serious military threat to national security and is so de-
23 clared by a joint resolution, adopted by a majority of the
24 whole number of each House, which becomes law. Any
25 such waiver must identify and be limited to the specific

1 excess or increase for that fiscal year made necessary by
2 the identified military conflict.

3 “SECTION 8. The Congress shall enforce and imple-
4 ment this article by appropriate legislation, which may rely
5 on estimates of outlays and receipts.

6 “SECTION 9. A court may not enter an order in any
7 action, including for purposes of enforcing this article,
8 that results in an increase in the collection of revenue.

9 “SECTION 10. Total receipts shall include all receipts
10 of the United States Government except those derived
11 from borrowing. Total outlays shall include all outlays of
12 the United States Government except for those for repay-
13 ment of debt principal.

14 “SECTION 11. This article shall take effect beginning
15 with the seventh fiscal year beginning after its ratifica-
16 tion.”.

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